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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listing of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-113 (Cancelled).

114. (New) Software stored on a computer-readable storage medium at a user station, comprising:

an online service selector function, stored and executable at the user station, that enables a user at the user station to select among a plurality of available online services to support an application function;

a common communications function, stored and executable at the user station, that directs establishment and use of a communication link between the user station and each online service, when the online service is selected;

a plurality of graphical user interface functions stored and executable at the user station, and associated with said application function, and used to present the user with different customized graphical user interface functions for different selected online services in support of said application function.

115. (New) The software as set forth in Claim 114, further comprising a set of translators and protocol drivers that facilitate establishment of the communication link between the user station and the selected online service.

116. (New) The software as set forth in Claim 114, further comprising a protocol translation function that facilitates establishment of the communication link between the user station and the selected online service.

117. (New) The software as set forth in Claim 114, further comprising an application programming interface that interconnects the online service selector function and the communications function.

118. (New) The software as set forth in Claim 114, further comprising a data transport function that effectuates data transfers between the user station and the selected online service via the established communication link.

119. (New) The software as set forth in Claim 118, wherein the data transport function uses an object manifest to effectuate data transfers.

120. (New) The software as set forth in Claim 119, further comprising an application programming interface through which the object manifest can be modified.

121. (New) The software as set forth in Claim 120, wherein the application programming interface interconnects the data transfer function and a higher-level software entity that can be invoked to modify the object manifest.

122. (New) The software as set forth in Claim 120, wherein the application programming interface interconnects the data transfer function and a high-level user interface that enables the user at the user station to modify the object manifest.

123. (New) The software as set forth in Claim 118, further comprising a plurality of user interface functions that enable the user to submit functional requests to the selected online service.

124. (New) The software as set forth in Claim 114, wherein the online service selector function presents the user with a list of the available online services.

125. (New) The software as set forth in Claim 114, wherein the user station is configured for communications with a multiplicity of independently-operated data sources via a non-proprietary network, and further comprises a data transport function that effectuates data transfers between the user station and a selected one of the independently-operated data sources via the non-proprietary network.

126. (New) The software as set forth in Claim 125, wherein the non-proprietary network comprises the Internet.

127. (New) The software as set forth in Claim 114, wherein portions of the software used to present the customized graphical user interface functions are downloaded from the selected online service in advance of their execution.

128. (New) The software as set forth in Claim 114, further comprising a plurality of database functions stored at the user station, wherein the user is presented with a different customized database function for each different online service by a corresponding one of said database functions.

129. (New) The software as set forth in Claim 128, wherein portions of the software used to present the customized database function are downloaded from the corresponding online service in advance of their execution.

130. (New) The software as set forth in Claim 114, wherein the presentation of each of said customized graphical user interface functions is facilitated by use of a common general purpose user interface software package stored and executable at the user station.

131. (New) The software as set forth in Claim 114, wherein each of the customized graphical user interface functions operates as a customized element of a common user interface software package stored and executable at the user station.

132. (New) The software as set forth in Claim 114, wherein the number of available online services can be expanded through use of the software to update itself from a remote source.

133. (New) A user station, comprising a processor and software stored on a computer-readable storage medium, the

software including:

an online service selector function, stored and executable at the user station, that enables a user at the user station to select among a plurality of available online services to support an application function;

a common communications function, stored and executable at the user station, that directs establishment and use of a communication link between the user station and each online service, when the online service is selected;

a plurality of graphical user interface functions stored and executable at the user station, and associated with said application function, and used to present the user with different customized graphical user interface functions for different selected online services in support of said application function.

134. (New) The user station as set forth in Claim 133, wherein the software further comprises a set of translators and protocol drivers that facilitate establishment of the communication link between the user station and the selected online service.

135. (New) The user station as set forth in Claim 133, wherein the software further comprises a protocol translation

function that facilitates establishment of the communication link between the user station and the selected online service.

136. (New) The user station as set forth in Claim 133, wherein the software further comprises an application programming interface that interconnects the online service selector function and the communications function.

137. (New) The user station as set forth in Claim 133, wherein the software further comprises a data transport function that effectuates data transfers between the user station and the selected online service via the established communication link.

138. (New) The user station as set forth in Claim 137, wherein the data transport function uses an object manifest to effectuate data transfers.

139. (New) The user station as set forth in Claim 138, wherein the software further comprises an application programming interface through which the object manifest can be modified.

140. (New) The user station as set forth in Claim 139,

wherein the application programming interface interconnects the data transfer function and a higher-level software entity that can be invoked to modify the object manifest.

141. (New) The user station as set forth in Claim 139, wherein the application programming interface interconnects the data transfer function and a high-level user interface that enables the user at the user station to modify the object manifest.

142. (New) The user station as set forth in Claim 137, wherein the software further comprises a plurality of user interface functions that enable the user to submit functional requests to the selected online service.

143. (New) The user station as set forth in Claim 133, wherein the online service selector function presents the user with a list of the available online services.

144. (New) The user station as set forth in Claim 133, wherein the user station is configured for communications with a multiplicity of independently-operated data sources via a non-proprietary network, and the software further comprises a data transport function that effectuates data transfers between



the user station and a selected one of the independently-operated data sources via the non-proprietary network.

145. (New) The user station as set forth in Claim 144, wherein the non-proprietary network comprises the Internet.

146. (New) The user station as set forth in Claim 133, wherein portions of the software used to present the customized graphical user interface functions are downloaded from the selected online service in advance of their execution.

147. (New) The user station as set forth in Claim 133, wherein the software further comprises a plurality of database functions stored at the user station, wherein the user is presented with a different customized database function for each different online service by a corresponding one of said database functions.

148. (New) The user station as set forth in Claim 147, wherein portions of the software used to present the customized database function are downloaded from the corresponding online service in advance of their execution.

149. (New) The user station as set forth in Claim 133, wherein the presentation of each of said customized graphical user interface functions is facilitated by use of a common general purpose user interface software package stored and executable at the user station.

150. (New) The user station as set forth in Claim 133, wherein each of the customized graphical user interface functions operates as a customized element of a common user interface software package stored and executable at the user station.

151. (New) The user station as set forth in Claim 133, wherein the number of available online services can be expanded through use of the software to update itself from a remote source.

152. (New) The user station as set forth in Claim 133, wherein the user station is a personal computer.